

## COMMUNITY FORUMS

### PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

CABINET

12TH JULY, 2007

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#### Wards Affected

County-wide

#### Purpose

To receive a report on the pilot Community Forum/Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings in November 2006, February 2007 and May/June 2007.

#### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

#### Recommendation

**That the report be noted.**

#### Reasons

To comply with the agreement that issues raised and discussed at Community Forums should be presented to Cabinet.

#### Considerations

1. These Forums were the first in a pilot scheme to combine Herefordshire Council Community Forums with the West Mercia Constabulary Communities and Partners Together (PACT) meetings.
2. For the pilot scheme, the number of meetings in each round was increased from six to nine, and the format was changed. Instead of a formal agenda and presentations on Council issues, the Forums became a platform for members of the community to raise issues of local concern for response by members of the Herefordshire Partnership. In practice, most issues have been for Herefordshire Council or West Mercia Constabulary. However, interest has recently begun to extend to parish and town councils, Herefordshire Housing and other bodies. All the issues raised were noted and taken away for response at the next Forum.
3. For the purposes of the pilot, the Forums were not chaired, as previously, by selected ward councillors. The first two rounds were chaired by Councillor Roger Phillips, Leader of Herefordshire Council; Mr Neil Pringle, Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council and Chief Superintendent Mark Turner, the Divisional Commander for West Mercia Constabulary (WMC). For the third round, in May/June 2007, it was decided to trial independent Chairing. Five Forums were chaired by Richard Gething, Chair of Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC), and a member of the Herefordshire Partnership Board and one by Russell Hamilton, Public Service Trust Project Director.

The other three Forums were chaired by Chief Superintendent Mark Turner (WMC), Mr Neil Pringle, the Council's Chief Executive and Mrs Jane Jones, the Council's Director of Corporate and Customer Services. A list of Chairs is at Appendix 1.

4. Appendix 2 contains an analysis of the proportion of issues for each of the main partners and an analysis of the Council issues by directorate. Around 60% of issues raised concerned Herefordshire Council's areas of responsibility. About 14% were issues for which both the Council and West Mercia Constabulary had some responsibility. Around 80% of issues raised for the Council were for the Environment directorate, and 60% of these issues (49% of the total), were for the Highways and Transportation Department.
5. Appendix 3 contains an analysis of the number of people attending each round of Forums. This helps to assess the level of interest in the Forums over the three pilot rounds held in November 2006, February 2007 and May/June 2007. It also compares the attendance figures for the pilot new-style Forums with attendance at the four rounds of the previous Community Forums in 2006.
6. A summary of the attendance figures shows the following:

	<b>Nov 06</b>	<b>Feb 07</b>	<b>May/June 2007</b>
North Wye	28	15	18
South Wye	15	19	13
Ross-on-Wye	52	21	30
Ledbury	22	29	29
Bromyard	47	12	13
Leominster	28	30	16
Kington	21	13	15
Hereford Rural	15	5	4
Golden Valley	24	16	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>156</b>

Average attendance was 28 in November 2006; 18 in February 2007 and 17 in May/June 2007. The average across all Forums for the three pilot rounds was 21. This compares with an average attendance of 14 for the four rounds of the previous style of forums in the year 2006. The highest attendance at the pilot rounds of Community Forum/PACT was 52 at Ross-on-Wye in November 2006 and the lowest was 4 at the Hereford Rural forum in May/June 2007.

7. The Forums were extensively advertised using the local press, posters and flyers. Information was also sent to every Parish Clerk explaining the importance of Forums and asking them to inform all Parish Councillors.

## **Consultees**

Cabinet Members and the Leader of the Council.

### Chairing of Forums

Forum	Chairs		
	Nov 06	Feb 07	May/June 07
South Wye	Cllr Roger Phillips	Neil Pringle, HC	Richard Gething, HALC
Hereford Rural	Mark Turner, WMC	Cllr Roger Phillips	Richard Gething, HALC
North Wye	Neil Pringle, HC	Neil Pringle, HC	Russell Hamilton, PST Project Director
Kington	Cllr Roger Phillips	Cllr Roger Phillips	Mark Turner, WMC
Golden Valley	Cllr Roger Phillips	Mark Turner, WMC	Neil Pringle, HC
Bromyard	Neil Pringle, HC	Cllr Roger Phillips	Richard Gething, HALC
Ross-on-Wye	Mark Turner, WMC	Neil Pringle, HC	Richard Gething, HALC
Ledbury	Neil Pringle, HC	Mark Turner, WMC	Richard Gething, HALC
Leominster	Mark Turner, WMC	Mark Turner, WMC	Jane Jones, HC

## Issues raised at Forums

Table 1

Forum	Herefordshire Council issues				West Mercia Constabulary				Issues for both organisations			
	Total	May/Jun 07	Feb-07	Nov-06	Total	May/Jun 07	Feb-07	Nov-06	Total	May/Jun 07	Feb-07	Nov-06
North Wye	34	12	14	8	12	0	4	8	7	2	2	3
South Wye	6	3	3	0	14	5	7	2	10	1	8	1
Hereford Rural	16	5	8	3	15	6	2	7	4	2	1	1
Kington	38	21	12	5	11	5	4	2	4	0	3	1
Bromyard	34	12	15	7	7	4	2	1	5	0	2	3
Leominster	28	10	10	8	11	6	3	2	7	5	5	2
Ledbury	31	16	11	4	16	3	7	6	4	1	3	0
Ross-on-Wye	43	7	22	15	22	5	9	8	6	4	1	5
Golden Valley	35	18	14	3	8	6	1	1	4	0	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>

	Total	May/Jun 07	Feb-07	Nov-06	%
WMC	116	40	39	37	26%
HC	266	104	109	53	60%
Both	60	15	28	17	14%
	442	159	176	107	

**Table 2****Analysis of Council issues**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>November 06</b>	<b>February 07</b>	<b>May/June 07</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Highways &amp; Transportation</b>	42	64	39	145	<b>49%</b>
<b>Environmental Services (other than Highways)</b>	14	39	40	93	<b>31%</b>
<b>Corporate &amp; Customer Services</b>	3	8	13	24	<b>8%</b>
<b>Children &amp; Young People's Services</b>	3	10	3	16	<b>5%</b>
<b>Adult &amp; Community Services</b>	1	9	5	15	<b>5%</b>
<b>Resources</b>	0	5	0	5	<b>2%</b>
	63	135	100	298	

N,b. Figures do not tie in exactly with those shown in HC/WMC split because of variations in counting. Some issues counted as a single issue in Table 1 split into several points for directorates to deal with and have been counted as separate issues in Table 2. Similarly, some complex issues may cut across more than one directorate. However, the figures give a broad indication of the proportion of issues raised for each directorate.

## Attendance at Forums

## “Old style” Community Forums 2006

Forum	Attendance				
	Totals & average	October 2006	July 2006	April 2006	January 2006
Hereford City	71 (18)	9	14	20	28
Golden Valley	95 (24)	16	19	10	50
Ross-on-Wye	46 (12)	9	3	7	27
North Herefordshire	46 (12)	11	10	12	13
Central Herefordshire	26 (7)	6	14	3	3
East Herefordshire	35 (12)	9	Cancelled	10	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Average Oct, Jan &amp; April = 14</b>					

## “New style” Community Forums 2006/7

Forum	Totals & average	May/June 2007	February 07	November 06
South Wye	47 (16)	13	19	15
Hereford Rural	24 (8)	4	5	15
North Wye	61 (20)	18	15	28
Kington	49 (16)	15	13	21
Bromyard	72 (24)	13	12	47
Leominster	74 (25)	16	30	28
Ross-on-Wye	103 (34)	30	21	52
Ledbury	80 (27)	29	29	22
Golden Valley	58 (19)	18	16	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>568 (21)</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Average 21</b>		<b>Average 17</b>	<b>Average 18</b>	<b>Average 28</b>